



U.S. Department of Justice

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EVENT: Guilty Verdict

Defendant: Tanish Summers

**ACCOUNTING FIRM VICE-PRESIDENT AND PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR
CONVICTED ON TAX FRAUD**

Tanisha Summers, 31, of Detroit, an accounting firm's vice-president, was convicted on charges of preparing false and fraudulent tax returns, and with conspiring to defraud the Internal Revenue Service. Camelia Peatross, 63, of Detroit, a private investigator, was also convicted of conspiring to defraud the Internal Revenue Service and falsely personating an IRS agent, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice M. Aouate, Special Agents in Charge of IRS Criminal Investigation and Peter E. McConney, Special Agent in Charge, Chicago Field Office, Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration.

According to evidence presented during the three week jury trial, Shawn Gibson, 46, of Detroit, owned several Detroit tax preparation services including Shawn Gibson & Co., New Detroit Tax Services, and Metro Verse Tax Service, of Oak Park from 2004-2006. To advertise their services and solicit clients, Gibson and vice-president Summers would pass out flyers informing potential clients of their tax preparation services. These potential clients would complete a Client Intake Sheet and receive a tax analysis. Whether the clients agreed to use their services or not, Gibson and Summers would file income tax returns on their behalf, adding false dependents, businesses deductions, losses, charitable contributions, and tax

credits, in order to increase the tax refund due. The fraudulent tax refunds totaled over \$318,149. In most cases, the refunds were electronically transferred into bank accounts controlled by Gibson, Summers, and Peatross. The clients then received a check in an amount substantially lower than that which was refunded by the IRS. In one case, the defendants received a fraudulent refund of over \$17,000, but provided the taxpayer with approximately \$3,500 of an anticipated refund, keeping the difference. Gibson, Summers, and Peatross concealed their theft of government funds by providing clients with copies of their non-filed income tax returns, which more accurately reflected their true tax refund or liability.

According to court records, in June 2006, while IRS Criminal Investigation had an ongoing investigation into Gibson's return preparation business, Gibson tried to unlawfully intimidate a witness from providing testimony, records, documents and the fraudulent refunds to the IRS. Later in June 2006, Peatross contacted a Flagstar Bank employee seeking to gain funds and information on an account associated with the scheme. Peatross identified herself as an IRS agent and asked that the funds of the account be put into a cashier check and sent to her home address. Peatross represented to the bank employee that she could facilitate the return of the funds back to IRS.

United States Attorney Murphy stated that "Fraud by the tax preparation specialist, and by a private investigator helping that specialist, is of a class by itself because tax payers depend on such professionals for their supposedly honest expertise and assistance. Not only the government, but the tax payers, are victimized by such criminals. I salute the excellent work of the trial attorney as well as the IRS investigators who put this case together."

"This was a case about little truths and a whole lot of lies," said Aouate. "While most return preparers provide an excellent service, a few unscrupulous tax preparers use their clients for their own greed."

McConney said, "TIGTA will vigilantly investigate all allegations of IRS impersonations and will work with the U.S. Attorney to prosecute all proven allegations to the fullest extent of the law."

Gibson had previously pled guilty to his charges and is currently serving a 34-month sentence. Gibson was also ordered to serve two years of supervised release and pay restitution in the amount of \$286,983. Summers and Peatross will be sentenced on October 18, 2007.

United States Attorney Murphy thanked IRS Criminal Investigation and the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration for their investigation of the case. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Noceba Southern Gordon.